BRITISH MUSEUM

To the Church of Christ, and every member thereof, over which Mr. Iohn Sympson was made (by the Holy-Spirit) over-seer.

Grace and Peace be multiplied unto you, thorow the knowledge of God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

Beloved in the Lord!

IF I should spend much time in making an Apologie for my self in reference to the Dedication of this following Discourse to you of the Congregation, I might well be judged to complement. It's yours by right: If it come into other hands (through God's blessing) it may do good, but as in the preaching of it I had, so now in the Printing of it I have a special respect for you, and to you of the Church it was first preach'd, and now printed for your sakes.

However I think meet in this place, to give some brief account of the reason both of its Publication and Dedication. First, for its Publication, the reason is manifold: 1. For that I did judge the subject in it self to be suitable to the present state of the people of God, and might be of use to the stirring them up to humiliation and reformation. 2. That I might manifest that dear respect I had for, and that affection I did bear

bear unto that choice servant of Christ deceased, under whose Ministry I have been so often refreshed and raised in my spirit. 3. *Because I was desired by several of the friends of Mr.* Iohn Sympson, *either to print my discourse, or give them copies of it; wherefore I chose to do the former, because I did judge it might give the greater satisfaction.* 4thly, *That I might do something towards the vindication of the name of that glorified saint, both from former, and later reproaches, and slanders. Those that have a good conscience, have not always a good name. The people of God in this life are called the troublers of* Israel; *they are seditious, rebellious, what not? Christ himself was accounted a deceiver, and imposter; and* Paul *was said to be a seditious person, and suffered (in the opinion of some) as an evill doer,* 2 Tim. 2. 9. *Wherein I suffer trouble as an evil doer, even unto bonds.* Job *was represented unto the world as an hypocrite, and that by his friends, which went very near him. The ministers of the Gospell must expect above any other to meet with reproaches (*2 Cor. 6, 8. *) the Devill hates them most, because they most oppose his Kingdom, and interest; and therefore if he can't debauch their consciences, hee'l spit his venom at them through the mouths of wicked and ungodly men. But let wicked men know, that the time is hastening on apace, wherein as God will make inquisition for blood, so for names; as the death, so the name of a saint is pretious in Gods accompt; God will roul away the reproach of his people;* *) *hee'l cause their innocency and righteousness to break forth as the sun at noon,* * *and their names shall be had in everlasting remembrance. I had thought something might have been done this way by a better pen before this time, but it being severall months since the death of Mr.* Sympson, *and nothing done, I was willing to make publique what I had preacht, & I hope it is not out of the pride and haughtiness my heart, (though a proud, and wicked heart I have, and blessed be free grace that in any measure I know it so to be, but to do Christ and his people service. The soul of our dear brother*

Josh. 5. 9.
Psal. 37. 6.
Psal. 112. 6.

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is in glory, above any Encomium or Eulogie that can be made of him: What therefore is spoken in the following discourse, extends not to him, but unto the living; it's not to advantage him, but to prevent others from disadvantaging themselves by thinking or speaking evilly of him. Lastly, That I might present the virtues of Mr. Sympson to you for your imitation; Undoubtedly it's your duty to follow him so far as he followed Christ. Now there were very many choice things in that faithful man, worthy of emulation and imitation, wherein you will do well to walk, as you had him for an example. Thus much for its publication.

The Reasons why I did dedicate it to you of the Congregation, are, First, Because I did judge the Dispensation of God to which the following Discourse refers, did more immediately concern you, than any other: it's true, there are many not of the Congregation, that did undoubtedly receive good by Mr. Sympsons Ministry, and will have cause to bless God for it unto all Eternity; and these are much concerned in his death: But however, considering his relation unto you, how he was under Christ your Bishop, Pastor, Feeder, Leader, &c. And how faithful, constant and laborious he was in the discharge of his trust committed to him, it must needs be granted, that that Providence of God did most nearly concern you, and consequently this following Discourse. 2. Its to acknowledge my thankfulness to God and you, for all those precious dayes and hours which I have enjoyed in your Assemblies. To my best remembrance I never saw nor enjoyed more of the presence and glory of God in any Assembly (setting the Ministry of Mr. Bridge of Yarmouth aside) than I have done in your Assemblies. The consideration of which, as it doth in the first place oblige me to bless the Lord (in whom all my Well-springs are, and who is the Fountain of consolation to his people) so in the next place it doth engage me to serve you his people (with, and among whom I have enjoyed such great mercies) to the utmost of my abilities. By this

Dedication

Dedication I do not profess to have paid my Engagements unto you, I do onely take an occasion hereby to acknowledge my self your Debtor. Pay my Engagements I cannot better then by praying for you. My hearty desire therefore to God for you is, That you all may know, love and enjoy Christ in truth; that every member of your visible Body may (by the Spirit) be baptized into that one Mystical Body, over which Christ is the Head, that Hell may be never the fuller for any of you, but that you may all live graciously, which is the way to dye blessedly. And further, that God would keep you together, and hide you in the secret of his presence, cause his glory to rest upon you, and cause a defence to be upon that his glory, that he would give you Pastors after his own heart, and anoint them with a double measure of his Spirit, a spirit fit both to rule and teach; to rule I say (not as Lords over your consciences, but) according to the blessed direction of Scripture-Canons; that so you may be able to bless God in the words of Ezra, (cap. 9. 8.) And now for a little space grace hath been shewed from the Lord our God, to leave us a Remnant to escape, and to give us a Nail in his holy Place, that our God may lighten our eyes, and give us a little reviving in our bondage.

All I desire (which I am sure I shall have) is your acceptance of this my love in the Lord. I can't say that I do here present unto you the same Sermon (verbatim) that you heard preached. For, besides those necessary distinctions that must be put between the Tongue and the Pen; I have superadded some things for the perfecting this Discourse, which I think you will not judge useless or needless when you shall have read it.

When ought of Truth is presented unto you, take heed of looking too much upon the hand that brings it, or upon the dress in which it comes; not upon the hand, because then if the instrument that presents it, be accounted unworthy, Truth will be despised: He that presents you with this following discourse, is a very unworthy instrument, as unworthy as you can imagine

gine him to be; though blessed be God, how vile soever he be in other mens eyes, he desires to be more vile in his own: But yet I hope you have learnt with the holy Prophet, to be content to be fed, though it be by a Raven; it's no matter who brings truth, so God sends it; though withall I would here give you this caution, Take heed of going out of Gods way for feeding. I conclude that that man that resolves to go to Rome *to learn the Articles of the Christian Faith, hath met with some bad counsel. Keep in thy way, and have thy Touchstone alwayes ready, and then (with the Goldsmith) when aught is presented unto thee, first try it, and if it prove right and sound, take it, and bless God for it, and mind not the person that brings it; but take heed of going out of thy shop, for it may be whilst thou art trading in other mens shops, thine own may be robbed.*

Again, Mind not the dress in which Truth comes. Many have such critical stomachs, that plain wholesome fare will not down with them, notwithstanding times are hard, and bread dear, yet they must have food in such a dress, or else they are not pleased; they'le be ready to slight such food as the Countrey people would be glad of with all their heart: I dare not invite one such person to my little Feast, and that because I fear there's not one bit will please him. I am plain, and cannot be otherwise: I dare say the following discourse is wholesome; if therefore wholesom food will please thee, eat, and much good may do thee. As to this particular I would only beg you, To look back and consider those many exhortations you had from that blessed man Mr. Cradock, *to keep close to the plainness and simplicity of the Gospel.*

To close: My dearly beloved, you are a people greatly blest of God, with respect to the means of Grace; your constant helps (for above these twenty years) have been glorious helps; your Auxiliary helps (which you have had in abundance) have been glorious helps. Considering one thing with another, I think I may say and not sin, you have enjoyed the Cream of the world: Surely Friends, God expects great things from you, expects you should be eminent Christians; Eminent, 1. In thankfulnes;

ever; the high praises of God should be in your mouth: for that he hath dealt so bountifully with you. 2. Eminent in fruitfulness; unfruitfulness under such means, soon sets the soul for cursing and burning, Isa. 5. Heb. 3. 12. Heb. 6. 7, 8. 3. Eminent in faithfulness; and that, 1. In respect of sincerity, Phil. 1. 10. You should not do things to be seen of men, but as always under Gods eye. 2. In respect of constancy, Rev. 2. 10. Be faithful unto the death, and I will give thee a Crown of Life. The Sermons thou hast heard, and the Servants of Christ that have preached unto thee, will all witness against thee, if thou shalt turn Apostate. Consider these things, and do accordingly, and it will be well with you now, hereafter, and best of all at last.

Vale.

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The periſhing and failing of good men, a matter of great and ſore lamentation.

Joh. 11. 35. *Jeſus wept.*

AS every thing is beautiful in its ſeaſon, ſo words when ſpoken in due ſeaſon, are *like apples of gold in pictures of ſilver.* And therefore it is the great work of a Preacher to conſider the ſtate of the people to whom he preaches, ſo to prepare his work before hand, as that he may hit the mark, knock the nail on the head: The Preacher ſought out acceptable words; now generally thoſe words are moſt acceptable to, and beſt received by the hearers (eſpecially intelligent hearers) that are ſuited to their preſent condition. Good words may be vain words in a preachers mouth, and they are evermore ſo, when they are either inconſiſtant to the argument in hand, or elſe altogether unſuitable to the capacity and ſtate of the hearers. I conſidering therefore the ſecret hand of God upon this Con-

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gregation, in taking away that eminent Servant of Christ, Mr. *John Sympson*, thought it incumbent upon me to speak something at this time that might be suitable to the present dispensation of God towards you, and in my meditations this Scripture was cast in, *Jesus wept*. The occasion of this text is known unto you; in the begining of this Chapter you read that *Lazarus* was sick, and the news thereof immediatly sent to *Jesus*; who notwithstanding he dearly loved him, yet (as the sequel of the story acquaints you) he doth not presently go up to *Bethany* to visit sick *Lazarus*, but maketh a stay for several days; the reason whereof is at hand, *viz.* That a sentence of death might pass upon beloved *Lazarus*, and he be laid in the grave, and a stone rouled upon him; and all this in order to the manifestation of the glory and power of Christ in his resurrection. It is good here to note, that as Christ here dealt with *Lazarus*, so he doth often deal with his beloved Spouse, his Church on earth: the Church she is sick, lieth languishing, and nigh to death; report hereof is made to Christ in heaven, and he is desired to come and visit his sick Spouse; Christ, though he loves his Spouse with a dear immutable love, yet he seemeth to turn a deaf ear upon this request, and carrieth it as if he did not mind *Zions* concernments, as if he cared not how she was abused and trampled on by this wicked persecuting world; but the reason (as above) lieth here, that so a sentence of death might pass upon the Church, and upon all her concerns and glory; and all this in order to the manifestation of Christs glorious power in her resurrection, that

that he may appear to be the great God, that can raise deliverance out of the duſt, appear for his people when there is none ſhut up or left.

After *Lazarus* had been in the grave four days, Chriſt he comes up to *Bethany*, and the ſiſters of *Lazarus*, viz. *Martha* and *Mary*, they come out to meet *Jeſus*; firſt *Martha* ſhe cometh, *ver.* 20. and ſhe ſaith, *Lord, if thou hadſt been here, my brother had not died*, ver. 21. After this comes *Mary*, verſ. 32 and ſhe falls down at Chriſts feet, ſaying, *Lord, if thou hadſt been here, my brother, had not died. When Jeſus therefore ſaw her weeping, and the Jews alſo weeping which came with her, he groaned in the Spirit, and was troubled; and ſaid, Where have ye laid him? They ſay unto him, Lord, come and ſee. Jeſus wept.*

There is very much wrapt up in the bowels of this little Text: Here we may take notice of the humanity of Chriſt; it appears by Chriſts weeping that he is perfect man, as well as perfect God. That Chriſt wept, is to be referred, not to his Divinity, but to his Humanity; and ſo we ſhall find that Chriſt was ſubject as to this, ſo to all natural infirmities; as hunger, thirſt, wearineſs, &c. which may comfort the Saints that groan under natural, as well as ſinful infirmities; and that from the reaſon why Chriſt was made in all things like unto his brethren; namely, *That he might be a merciful High-prieſt, Hebr.* 2. 17, 18. And though Chriſt be now in glory, yet he is touched with the feeling of the infirmities of his people here on earth, *Hebr.* 4. 15. ſo touched, as that he cannot but have compaſſion on them under all their preſſures and grievances whatſoever. The text opened.

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Do'ſt thou then groan under natural weakneſſes and infirmities? Go boldly to the throne of grace, (which is the uſe the Apoſtle makes of this doctrin, *Heb.*4.16.) and ſpread thy weakneſſes and infirmities before the Lord, and thou maieſt in faith expect grace to help in this need, that Chriſt ſhould enable thee to bear up under theſe weakneſſes, until mortality ſhall have put on immortality.

But to come to the thing I intend, and that is the occaſion of Chriſts weeping, which was the death of *Lazarus*, a good man: whence I ſhal obſerve and proſecute this Doctrine;

Doctr. *That it is a Chriſt-like frame of ſpirit, to be deeply affected with, and to mourn over the death of ſuch as are truly gracious.*

Here's *Lazarus* a good man in his grave, and Chriſt he weeps over him: you have a weeping Chriſt over a dead *Lazarus*.

When old *Jacob* an eminent perſon was buryed; it's ſaid *Gen.* 50: 10: (*That they mourned with a great and ſore lamentation*, and that for 7 dayes together. And ſo when *Moſes* (that eminent ſervant of the Lord, that brought the children of *Iſrael* out of *Egypt* very neer to the good Land) died, and was buried by a ſecret hand, it's ſaid, *the children of Iſrael mourned for him* 30 *days*, Deut. 34. 8.

My deerly beloved, you have loſt a *Moſes*, one that was valiant for God in former times, when the people of God in *England* were coming out of *Egypt*, & he hath been an eminent leader to the ſaints in their wilderneſs ſtate, and God did often make him

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to the top of *Pisgah*, and gave him their glorious visions, and that not onely of heavenly *Canaan*, but also of that glorious land of rest and righteousness that the Saints shall injoy in this world, when the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be advanced upon the top of all mountains, and the Kingdomes of this world become the Kingdomes of the Lord, and of his Christ; of which things he hath often spoke unto you in much life and power. Now that such a *Moses* should be taken off in the Wilderness, while the people of God are yet short of this good Land, is matter of great humiliation.

Likewise you find the same spirit in those Christians, *Acts* 20. that *Paul* (the great Apostle of the Gentiles) did there take his farewel of, saying, *ver.* 25. *And now behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the Kingdom of God, shall see my face no more.* It's said, 37, 38 verses, *And they all wept sore, and fell on Pauls neck, and kissed him: Sorrowing most of all for the words which he spake* [*that they should see his face no more.*]

David also is exceedingly affected in this kind, *Psal.* 12. 1. *Help Lord, for the godly man ceaseth, for the faithful fail from among the children of men.* And do the Church, *Micah* 7. *Wo is me, for I am as when they have gathered the summer-fruits, as the grape-gleanings of the Vintage; there is no cluster to eat---The good man is perished out of the earth: and there is none upright among men, &c.*

And the Prophet *Isaiah*, Chap. 57. vers. 1. laments and bemoans the spiritual security of the children of *Israel*, expresst by this, That they did not observe

serve & take notice, neither were they affected with the perishing & taking away of the righteous, and the merciful man, and chargeth upon them this senceless and stupid frame of heart, as their great and common sin.

Now by all this it appears, that it is both the duty and property of a Christian (such an one as hath been baptized into the spirit of Jesus) to be deeply affected with the death of such as are truly gracious, especially when they are eminent for use and service to Christ, and his people.

Reas. We shall now give you the reasons why it is so, and cannot be otherwise, but that gracious persons must needs be affected with, and mourn over the death of good men.

1. First, Because every stroke in this kind, puts a serious heart in mind of its mortality, tells us that we are dying mortall creatures, and that's a very serious consideration to every awakened soul. *The living, the living will lay it to heart*, saith *Solomon*, Eccle. 7. 2. The stroke of death upon others, tells us that dye we must, and how soon the Lord knows; and O happy! thrice happy is that person that can dye wel. We are ready to say, blessed is the rich man, and the honourable man, and the professing man; the man that can speak wel, and pray well, and live well, but above all (say I) blessed is the person that dyes well. Now such strokes as these puts a serious soul in mind of dying. Ther's none present knows who may dye next, may go to the grave next. That's the First, but then,

2. 2 It springs from that Simpathy that is both in nature,

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nature, and in grace: first in nature, when God takes away a husband, a father, a child, &c. this cuts deep, and affects much, *Abraham* he mourns over beloved *Sarah*. *David* over *Absolom*, though a rebellious son. To be stupid, and not to mind the hand of God when he smites our near and dear relations, doth declare, that we do not onely want grace, but natural affection; and to be without natural affection, is a very black character, 2 *Tim.* 3. 2.

And then in *Grace* there is also a great sympathy; if God smites one member of the Church, the rest are affected with it: If a *Paul*, a Minister of Christ, a Pastor, a spiritual Father, comes to take his farewell of his people, and tell them that they shall never see his face more; oh what weeping, and mourning, and lamenting is there at his departure!

3*dly*, Another reason is, Because there is much of God's anger oft times to be seen in such strokes of God's anger; I say, not against the persons taken away, but against those that remain; As when God taketh away a Father, a Husband, a Wife, *&c.* the soul of that Relation may be carryed to Heaven, and there possessed of glory, and yet nevertheless the death of that Relation may be in judgement to the Family. And so in a spiritual Relation, God may take away a holy Minister, a faithful Pastor, and this in judgement to the Flock, to those that sate under his Ministry: And surely it is the great concernment of you of this Congregation to hear the voice of this Rod, and of him that hath appointed it, and to endeavour to know the mind of God in this great stroke. 3.

4*thly*,

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4*thly*, The perishing of good men is a matter of great humiliation, and that because they are a great blessing to the nations, cities, families, &c. where they are cast. It fares either the better, or the worse with such places for their sake. When God destroyed the old world, the family of *Noah* was saved for *Noahs* sake, *Gen.*7. And God hath promised to bless them that bless his people, and curse them that curse his people. *Gen.* 12: 3: & 27: 29 *Numb.*24. 9. Wo then to the ranting damning crew of this generation, who make it a matter of sport to curse the saints of the most high, for as sure as God is in heaven (without true repentance) those curses will return upon there one heads,

The story likewise of *Abimelech* is remarkable, *Gen.* 20. it's said, *God fast closed up all the wombs of the house of Abimelech, because of Sarah Abrahams wife*, ver. 18*th*. and ver. 7, *God himself saith to Abimelech, restore the man (meaning Abraham) his wife, for he is a prophet, and he shall pray for thee, and thou shalt live, and if thou restore her not, know you, that thou shalt surely dye, thou, and all that are thine.*

Moreover you read that God blessed the house of *Potipher*, and all that he had for *Josephs* sake, *Gen.* 39.1. & 5 *verses*. And the house of *Obed-Edom* was blest for the ark sake, 2.*Sam* 6: 10, 11. And the Citie of *Zoar* was saved for *Lots* sake, that he might have a refuge to flie unto, *Genesis* 19. and *Proverbs* 11. 10. 11. saith thus, When it goeth well with the righteous, the city rejoyces: and when the wicked perish, there is shouting. By the blessing of the upright the city is exalted: but it is overthrown by

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the mouth of the wicked. Surely then, if the city rejoyceth, and is exalted by the blessing, and prosperity of the righteous, those rulers and great men of the earth, that have endeavored, or shall endeavour to establish themselves in their greatness, power, and glory, by the imprisoning, & banishing, of the saints, are exceedingly blinded, and infatuated; for by this, they discover themselves to be of the spirit of *Haman*; who could not be contented with his name, and honour, so long as *Mordecai* sate at the Kings gate: so they, they have not been content with their greatness, so long as the people of God have had any breathing among them, but still have designed the building of themselves, and their kingdomes, upon the ruines of such, of whom this world is not worthy: It had been well for such, if they had seriously considered the just judgement of God, upon this proud *Haman*, he sought his own advancement, designed that, and he was advanced, with a witness; for he was hanged upon a Gallows fifty cubits high.

Mind also these Scriptures, wherein this particular is further proved, *Isa.* 19. 24. *In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, even a blessing in the midst of the land.* Ezek. 34. 25. 26. *And I will make with them a covenant of peace, and will cause the evil beasts to cease out of the land: and they shall dwell safely in the wilderness, and sleep in the woods. And I will make them, and the places round about my hill, a blessing; and will cause the*

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ſhower to come down in his ſeaſon: there ſhall be ſhowers of bleſſing. Micah 5.7. *And the remnant of Jacob ſhall be in the midſt of many people, as a dew from the Lord, as the ſhowers upon the graſſe, that tarrieth not for man, nor waiteth for the ſons of men.*

In which ſcripture the great encreaſe the remnant of *Jacob* ſhall have in, and the great bleſſing they ſhall be unto the nations of the world, is prophecied of.

The people of God muſt needs be a bleſſing to the places where they dwell; for.

1. First, There is God eſpecially preſent: that land that is planted with righteous people, may *Ezek.48.ult.* be rightly called *Jehovah Shammah*; for the Lord *Pſal.46.5.* is there. God is in the midſt of her, &c. But.

2. Righteous ones are the ſtrength and ſafety of the nations where they are, the pillars indeed upon which the world ſtand: and to ſpeak the truth, the world is ſaved for their ſakes. *Jer.5. ver.1.*

God there ſaith, *That if one man could be found in Jeruſalem that did execute judgment, and ſought the truth, he would pardon it.*

In theſe words two things are to be noted: First, that the people of God were at this time reduced to a very ſmall number, and thoſe that *Jer. 5. 25. to the end.* were, were hid, could not be ſeen; for *Solomon* ſaith *Prov.28.12. but when the wicked riſe, a man is hidden.*

The rulers and magiſtrates at this time were as bad as hell, Divels incarnate; and when there are

are such magistrates, then righteous persons must lye hid, there is no appearing for them at such a time.

Proverbs 28. ult. *when the wicked rise, men (that is good men) hid themselves: but when they perish, the righteous increase.*

But. 2, and to the purpose, by (a man) in this text, we are to understand, that a very few, a small number of righteous ones should serve to save the city.

And answerable to this, you have God condescending to the prayer of *Abraham* concerning *Sodom* so low, that if there were but 10 righteous persons to be found in it, yet he would save the city for the sake of those ten righteous, And although there was but one righteous person to be found in *Sodom*, namely *Lot*, (and therefore called by the *Sodomites*, This one fellow, *Gen.* 19. 9:) yet Gods hands were so tyed, and bound up by this one righteous man, that he could not destroy *Sodom*, untill *Lot* was got safe to *Zoar*; for, saith the Angel to *Lot*, verse 22. Hast thee, escape thither; (for I cannot do any thing) till thou be come thither, &c. *Gen.* 18.

The people of God by their prayers & tears preserve the places wherein they live from wrath and judgement, as appears by these scriptures, *Gen.* 19. 20. *Exo.* 32. 11. 12. 13. 14. 31. 32. & 33. 12. 13. & 34: 8: 9: *Deut.* 9: 18. to the end *Ioshua* 7: 7: 8: 9: 1: *Sam.* 23: *Jer.* 13. 17. & 14: 7. 8. 9. 19: to the end; *Lamen*: 1. 16. And although

it's possible the sin of a nation, or people may be so very great, of such a Scarlet die, and cloathed with such circumstances, as that God may not hear the prayers of his righteous ones for that nation or people, (*as Jer.* 15. 1. *Ezek.* 14. 14.) but pour out his wrath upon them without remedie;* yet nevertheless such is the prevalency of the saints with God in prayer, as that we find, when destruction and ruine hath been threatned, and hath seemed to be entring in at the windows, and at the door, the prayers and intercessions of righteous ones (they flinging themselves in the gap, and pleading with God upon the account of his name, honour and mercy) hath diverted judgement, and procured national mercy and pardon many a time: And again, such is the prevalency of saints in prayer, as that if God be resolved to destroy a nation, he first restrains the spirit of prayer; he saith to his holy ones, *pray not for this people for their good*, (*Jer. chap.* 7. 16 & 11. 14. & 14. 11.) *and let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them*, (Exod. 32. 10.) as much as to say, Give me my hands at liberty, and do not tye me up from destroying this people. I can't destroy while *Moses* doth thus pray, and therefore *Moses* hold thy peace; cease praying, that I may devour, and destroy.

2 *Chron.* 36. 16.

Yet once more, such is the prevalency of Prayer, that if there be a spirit of Faith and Prayer in the Saints on the behalf of a Nation, or people, it's almost an infallible sign that God will not destroy,

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ſtroy, but have mercy upon that people. The prayers of the Saints (with holy reverence be it ſpoken) do overcome the Almighty; ſo that God cannot withſtand the faith and prayer of his people, and the reaſon lieth here; Becauſe they wreſtle with God in his own ſtrength, they engage the Almighty in almighty ſtrength, and ſo muſt needs be prevailers.

Well then might *Eliſha* ſay of *Elijah* (that mighty man of prayer) when he was taken up to heaven, [*the chariot of Iſrael and the horſemen thereof*] and alſo King *Joaſh* ſay the ſame of *Eliſha*, when he lay ſick of his deadly ſickneſs; For that indeed the ſtrength of a Nation lyeth not in chariots and horſemen, in towers and caſtles, &c. but in the prayers of the [Faithful] of the land. It's not the Common-prayers of the common ſwearers and drunkards that will ſecure and inſafe a people, but the fervent prayers of righteous ones. Wicked ſwearers, Drunkards, Adulterers, Idolaters and truce-breakers are the plague and curſe of a Nation; but holy, believing and praying ones, they are the bleſſing of a Nation. A Nation is more beholding to the meaneſt Kitchin-maid in it, that hath in her a ſpirit of prayer, then to a thouſand of her profane ſwaggering Gentry; ſuch Gentry that are better at whoring, ſwearing and drinking, then they are at praying. When they are drunk they'l curſe and ban the people of God to the pit of hell; but alas, the people of God (in a holy ſenſe) doth laugh them

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to ſcorn: they'l put the prayers, and tears, and ſighs of one righteous perſon, againſt ten thouſand of theſe poor ſelf-deſtroyers; and will be confident, that the prayers and tears of that one perſon (be he a Cobler, or a Tinker, or be ſhe a Kitchin maid, as aboveſaid) ſhall do them more good, then ten thouſand of them ſhall do hurt by all their oaths and curſes.

Theſe profane wretches, are ready to wiſh the people of God all out of the world, but alas! what would then theſe wretches do? they are beholding to the ſaints for their very beings, and for the continuance of all their mercies.

When God hath but once gathered in his elect, and done his work in *Zion*, he will ſoon pull the world about theſe mens ears: If the righteous be taken away, *he is taken away from the evill to come*, (*Iſa.* 57: 1:) Wo to *Sodom*, if *Lot* depart; and ſo I may ſay, Wo to *England*, if the righteous ſhould be taken away; Wo to *London*, whenever thou ceaſeſt to be a refuge to the ſaints, whenever thy gates ſhall be ſhut againſt the miniſters and people of the *Lord Jeſus*.

Ten thouſand woes to that man, family, citie, or nation, that engageth againſt the prayers of the Saints; that ſeeks to defend and maintain that intereſt which the Saints do (by Scripture-rule) pray againſt, and believe muſt go down. If I know my heart, I would not be in the condition of

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of such for the whole world. Blind fools! do they think to stand against the faith and praiers of the Saints, which (in a holy sense) overcometh God himself? If they do, they may find themselvs mistaken when it is too late.

The children of Israel, though they slighted and despised the Prophets, would in time of distress come to them for prayer, 1 *Sam.* 7.8.9. & 12.19. Yea *Pharoah*, as proud, and as high as he was, yet when the plague was upon him, *Moses* he must be sent for, and be entreated to pray for him, and his people.

The time may come, when the proudest persecutor on earth, may see cause to beg the prayers of such whom he now persecutes.

And thus much for the reasons of the doctrine, shewing why the people of God must needs be affected with, and mourn over the death of praying and believing ones.

Wee shall now proceed to application.

And first it affords matter of information; as *Use* 1.
First, if it be a Christ like frame to mourn over the death of such as are truly gracious, it informs us, how unlike to Christ such are; who though they plead for Christian buriall, yet do attend funerall solemnities with a vain, wicked, ungodly spirit, and carriage, making the house of mourning a house of laughter, and filling themselves with wine (wherein is excess) until they become more like beasts then men, which is a practice that may be found, not onely among the poor ignor-

ignorant country people, but too often in this great city.

You may soon judge how fit such persons are to attend upon a funerall Sermon; but indeed I am apt to think, funerall Sermons have generally been rather for ostentation, and vain glory, then for profit.

Hereby is likewise condemned that heathenish practice of ringing of bells so soon as ever funeral solemnites are performed:

How unsuitable is it, that so soon as ever the husband, or wife, or a godly friend is laid in the earth, to set the bells a ringing, which imports matter of joy rather then of sorrow?

I am preaching now to a people, who have by a profession separated themselves from the world, and the traditions thereof; you'l do well to keep your ground in these evil dayes, and so to educate and bring up your children as that they also may be delivered from these snares, But

2 If it be a Christ like frame of spirit to bewail the perishing of good men, it informs us how unlike to Christ that spirit is, whereby men do censure, and reproach good men when taken away by death.

And I do the rather mention this, because some have taken the boldness to judge and censure this pretious servant of Christ now in glory, and to speak very unworthily concerning him, since his death:

Oh dreadfull how unlike to Christ is this spirit?

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rit? thou that shouldst be judging & condemning thy self for non improvement of so great a mercy, art judging this eminent servant of Christ now dead. The Liturgy of the Church of *England* wil teach thee better; for let persons be never so vile in their lives, yet when they come to be laid in the grave, then they are dear brethren & sisters. Consider you that are of this spirit, how sad it will be if this servant of Christ shall appear as a witness against you at the great day of account, if the sermons that he preach'd, & the profers of grace that God made by him, shal witness against thee, and thou then be judged, condemned, and sent to hell for not receiving, entertaining, and improving the precious sermons of this glorified saint. It's possible now you that judge and condemn him, and speak more then you know, or more then is truth of him, and that possibly to carnall and wicked persons, you may have your tale heard, & it may be pleasing to wicked prophane people, that he should be so judged by his own followers, but at the great day of Christ there wil be none to hear a tale against him: at that day, God will clear his innocency before men and Angels, and it shall appear to all the world, that he was a true and a faithful servant of Christ, when it may be some of those that do now judge him, shall then be condemned for notorious hypocrits; and it shall appear, that (notwithstanding all their profession, and pretended Zeal for the name, and glory of God,) they were workers of iniquity,

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and ſuch who did live in the love of ſome accurſed ſin or other.

O therefore away with this ſpirit, to hell with it, for from thence it came. Let it ſuffice that this glorified ſaint ſuffered much in this kind while he was living: I am apt to think the heats, and paſſions, and raſh cenſures of profeſſors, hath made him oft go home with a ſad heart, and coſt him many a tear in private: let this his ſuffering ſuffice, let not his name ſuffer now he is dead: ſuffer him to be quiet in his grave: Leave his judgement to the Lord, and let it be your work to improve thoſe many pretious ſermons that he hath in the fear of his God preach'd unto you.

About Mr. Sympſon's *taking the Oaths.*

As to the matter of his taking the Oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy upon his releaſment out of Priſon, which hath occaſioned ſo much talk, I ſhall onely ſay theſe two things.

First, that in Queen *Elizabeths*, and King *Fames* time, theſe Oaths were taken and pleaded for; and that not onely by the faith and troth Chriſtians, but even by the Non-conformiſts of thoſe times, who were eminent for God in their day, and whoſe names are yet pretious among the Lords people, & who are known (by their works) to be men greatly inlightned in the myſteries of the Goſpel. Now although I do not look upon their example to be binding to the ſaints in after-ages, or a ſufficient rule for our practice, yet I judge the conſideration not onely of the great holyneſs, but alſo of the clear light that many of thoſe

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thoſe (who did then take the Oaths with great ſatiſfaction) had in the word of God, may a little take off the edge of that bitter ſpirit that is in many profeſſors againſt their brethren for theſe things; for that it cannot be judged otherwiſe, but that many who did take theſe Oaths with great ſatisfaction, are now in glory: But

2. Who made thee Lord over thy Brother's Conſcience? Muſt all profeſſors be condemned by thee, becauſe they cannot ſee with thy eyes, and tread in thy ſteps? By what authority doeſt thou impoſe thy particular light and perſwaſion upon thy brother; & that ſo, as almoſt to un-ſaint him without conformity? This impoſing ſpirit is an Antichriſtian ſpirit evermore. How unlike thy ſelf doſt thou act, when notwithſtanding thou pleadeſt for *Liberty of Conſcience*, and againſt impoſitions, yet thou ſhalt impoſe thine own perſwaſions upon thy brother after this rate: Such impoſing ſpirits (let their profeſſions be what they will) are not to be confided in; for it may well be feared, that thoſe that can ſo readily take away the good name of a godly man, becauſe he cannot conform to their Light, would take away his eſtate and liberty alſo upon the very ſame account, were it in their power. Indeed thoſe men are greatly to be lamented that ſhall ſin againſt Light, againſt avowed principles, againſt ſolemn covenants and engagements, ſhall do that which is clean contrary to their own doctrines and aſſertions; I mean, when thoſe avowed principles, 2. *Note.*

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solemn covenants, doctrines and assertions have been according to the Word of God. But thus did not this faithful man, he did nothing in this matter but what was according to his Light; and that is evident, for that several months before his imprisonment he did publickly declare his judgment to be for, and not against the taking of these Oaths, and did plead it while in prison with several friends; and when he came before the Court, the matter lying so, that either he must take the Oaths, or else return to prison, he did judge that he should have sinned against God, and against those over whom the Holy Ghost had made him overseer, and against his family, and against himself, if he should have returned to prison for refusing that which he had light to do. The case being thus (as it is known to hundreds to be) I should hardly trust my life, estate, or liberty in that mans hand, that should trample upon the name of Mr. *John Simpson* for so doing.

Use 2. The next use may be of Exhortation. Is it so, that it is a Christ-like frame of spirit to be deeply affected with, & to mourn over the death of such as are truly gracious; Then it concerns us seriously to consider the providences of God this way, and that more generally, and more particularly. First more generally, God hath lately made sad breaches upon many of the families of his precious servants; many a flourishing family hath mouldred away in a little time: And God hath lately taken away many very famous instruments,

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ments, both Miniſters and others; ſo that we have cauſe to cry out with the Pſalmiſt, *Pſ.* 12. 1. *Help Lord, for the godly man ceaſeth; for the faithful fail from among the children of men.* Now this diſpenſation of God calls for deep humiliation, and it becomes us to bow before God, and to meet him in the way of his judgments, leaſt his wrath break out further againſt us, and there be no remedy.

But 2*d.* and more particularly, I would beg you of this Congregation to conſider the preſent ſtroke of God upon you in taking away Mr. *John Sympſon:* And for the enforcing of this conſideration, I ſhall propoſe theſe few particulars:

Firſt, This to me is a very ſpeaking providence. I know all the providences of God ſpeaks ſomething to us, but this ſpeaks very much; as, firſt it ſpeaks forth an immediate hand of God: God hath taken him from you, and not man. Now for God to take away his Miniſters at ſuch a day as this is, muſt needs be a ſpeaking providence; even at ſuch a day wherein men ſlay them civilly, ſlay them in their teſtimony, and render them as naturally dead, for God then to take them away by death, is as much as if God ſhould ſay, Well, if my ſervants trouble you, if their teſtimony be a torment unto you, I'le take them from you, and provide for them in another world. You ſay they ſhal be as if they were naturally dead; and becauſe you ſay ſo, they ſhall be dead indeed: for God and man to be both at this work; man to

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ſlay them civilly, and God to ſlay them judicially, is ſurely matter of great lamentation.

2. 2. This ſtroke may ſpeak forth to many of you, a non-improvement of ſo great a mercy as the continuance of his Miniſtery was: I judg many of you preſent lived years under the Miniſtry of this faithful ſervant of Chriſt, and his Miniſtry hath been unto you *As a very lovely ſong, of one that hath a* Ezek. 33. 32 *pleaſant voice, and can play well on an inſtrument: you have heard his words, but you would not do them.* There hath not been a ſuitable converſation to ſuch a Miniſtry: A Goſpel, ſpiritual, heavenly Miniſtry, calls for a Goſpel, ſpiritual and heavenly Converſation; ſuch was his Miniſtry, but ſuch (I fear) hath not been the converſation of many of his hearers. And indeed all of us that did injoy more or leſs of his labours, have cauſe to mourn before the Lord this day for our non-improvement, that we were ſo vain and careleſs in our hearing; that we took no more care about the hearing, receiving, and practiſing what God was pleaſed to reveal unto us by his ſervant. This faithfull man might (according to the judgement of reaſon) have lived many years, & done much ſervice: Now for God to take away his faithfull labourers in the midſt of their days, to cauſe their ſun to ſet at noon, is a providence that hath a dreadfull aſpect upon unfaithfull, and unfruitfull hearers. And indeed ſuch like ſtrokes tells us all, that Eternity draws on apace, that 'twil not be long ere the Kingdom of Chriſts patience be over:

ver: 'twil be but as a day, and Christ shall cease to make proffers of grace, and the spirit shal cease to strive with man, and all faithful Ministers and Laborers shall cease to pray and preach for ever: and those unalterable words shall be made good, *Rev.* 22.11. *Let him that is unjust be unjust still*, &c. Oh! what would many a condemned wretch give at the great day to have Christ, and mercy, and pardon proffered to it then, as they have been many a time proffered in the Ministry of this glorified Saint? But know (O soul) that if thou dieſt deſpiſing and rejecting Christ and ſpiritual bleſſings, Christ will deſpiſe thee at that day; and then 'twil not be all thy crying and roaring that will ſave thee from the wrath of the Lamb, from everlaſting plagues and judgements.

3. This diſpenſation of God may poſſibly ſpeak to many of you, a diſpiſing & ſleighting the perſon and gifts of this holy man. In this generation of profeſſors hath been found a haughty proud ſpirit, a heart lifted up againſt God, and his honeſt ſincere hearted ſervants: No ſooner have perſons gotten a few airy notions of religion, but preſently they have been apt to ſlight, and trample upon, not onely thoſe that have been below them, but upon thoſe alſo who have infinitly (to ſpeak by way of compariſon) excelled them, both in parts, and grace. Now for God to take away his eminently gifted ſervants, doth very much condemn this proud and haughty ſpi- 3.

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rit. In such kind of providences, God seemeth thus to speak, Is it not enough, [O ye professors of England] is it not enough, that my faithfull ministers, & labourers should be reproached, and scorned, and trampled on by the prophane wicked people, but you [my professing people] must despise, and scorn them, and delight to grieve their spirits. When it may be a faithful servant of mine hath with prayers, and tears [secretly] sought unto me for light in such a scripture, or truth, and I have answered his prayer, and given him light therein, and he hath preacht unto you in my spirit, and fear, then (with a great deal of dis-respect to my servant) you have brought forth your objections and cavils against the truth delivered, and this not to satisfie your selves in the knowledge of truth: It hath not been that you might know, love, and obey truth, but to please your itching ears, and your critical fancies; and so have sent home my servant with a troubled and a perplexed spirit for your sakes. Well, saith God, since it is so, that my servants testimony is a torment to the prophane, and their gifts, and persons despised by you, that profess my name, I'l take them out of the world, out of all your way, take them into mine own bosome, and kingdom, where neither a scornful malicious sinner, nor a proud professor shall trouble, or grieve them more.

This kind of spirit was in the Church of *Corinth:* *Paul* (that glorious preacher) was sleighted by many

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many of the gifted persons of that Church, * and it's not to be questioned, but that there were some in that Church that thought themselves as wise as *Paul*, and as fit to preach as *Paul*, and to advise, and give counsell as *Paul*, &c. * 1 Cor. 12. 10.

But I would have persons of this spirit, to weigh that text, *Ezek.* 33. 30. saith God to Ezekiel, *Also thou son of man, the children of thy people are still a talking against thee by the walls, and in the doors of the houses, and speak one to another, every one to his brother, saying, Come, I pray you, and hear what is the word that cometh from the Lord.*

Here God taketh notice of their secret whisperings against his Prophets, how they spoke against Ezekiel behind the door, and the wall, and said (scoffingly) come, let us go hear what this *Ezekiel* will tell us from the Lord, what storie of judgement and wrath he hath to prate of to day. My dearly beloved, God taketh notice of all those unworthy speeches that are spoken secretly concerning his ministers, he takes notice of that vain sleight spirit that hath been among professors, who have said one to another, Come, lets go hear such a man to day, hear what he will say, what news he will tel us, what he will speak in the name of the Lord to us this day, &c. Beloved is there ever a soul in this congregation, that hath secretly spoken against this faithfull servant of Christ, now in heaven? Oh! that God would break thy heart, and so sanctify this present stroke, as that it may tend to humble thee under the sense of thy sin. And thus much for the first argument

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to move to humiliation, *viz.* that the death of this faithfull servant of Christ, is a very speaking providence.

2. Secondly, To move you to a sense of this stroke consider these two great circumstances wherewith it was cloathed: First, That God took him away immediately upon his releasment out of Prison, when you had some hopes of a further enjoyment of his labors: and Secondly, That God should take him away at such a time, a time wherein there is the greatest want of faithful and zealous laborers, as hath been for many scores of years in *England*; especially of such as are inlightned in, and zealous for Church-work; such as have abilities for, and a heart to that great work of maintaining the people of God in their separation from the world, and Antichristian defilements.

3. Thirdly, A third motive to humiliation, is that near relation that was between this servant of the Lord, and many of you present: he was to many of you a faithful Pastor and Teacher; who labored amongst you in the Word and Doctrine. And mind what the Prophet saith, *Zech.* 13. 7. *Smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered, &c.* If the Lord prevent not, now the shepherd is smitten you'l be scattered; for it will be hard to find a person so ready to venture life and liberty to feed you, as undoubtedly (had God spared him) he would have been. And besides, to many of you he might be a spiritual Father, a Father in Christ,

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Christ, a means of your Conviction and Conversion; and oh! what hard hearts have you, if you cannot mourn over a dead Father, a dead shepherd, a faithful Pastor when taken from you, &c? But

Fourthly, consider those blessed qualifications wherewith this servant of Christ was bespangled, and whereby he was inabled to serve the glory of God and your souls: As, 4.

Firſt, he was one that had love for all Saints: he had room in his heart for every soul that he did judge to be received into the heart of Christ: he held communion with the Saints, not upon the account of this or that form, or name, but upon the account of union with the Lord Jesus: he loved no man upon the account of opinion, but upon the account of union with Christ, and this he hath declared many a time in this Congregation. There was hardly a member that he did in the name of Christ and the Church give the right hand of fellowship unto, but he did acquaint them with this his principle; told them that union with Christ was the ground of communion among the Saints; and the reason of their admission was not their being of this or that opinion, but for that they were judged persons interested in Christ, and such who (by virtue of Christs purchase) were heirs of that glory above that must receive all Saints (not as Presbyters, or Independents, or Anabaptists, &c.) but as Saints, into its everlasting habitations. 1.

Secondly, He had great light in the doctrine of Free Grace, he had cast anchor within the vail, and understood much of that great mystery of the mercy seat. And indeed here lay the glory of his ministry, in holding forth the riches of Gods grace by Jesus Christ. In the preaching of this Doctrine, he was a mystery to this blind world, they could not understand him, and therefore hardly knew by what name to call him; and not onely so, but he was an offence to many professors; for they (not being able to reach him) did judge that he intended liberty to sin, notwithstanding he did often mention those cautions laid down by the Apostle, *Rom.* 6. 1. 2. 15. *Gal.* 2. 17. And as at many other times; so (blessed be God) a little before his imprisonment, preaching from that text *Rev.* 3. 15. 16. &c. he did so charge professors with their lukewarmness, and hypocrisie, and neglect of closet duty, and family duty, and Church duty. that he left a sufficient testimony behind him, for the stopping of such mouths for ever. But in this the servant was not above his Lord; for the Pharisees did thus charge Christ, they did charge him with being a friend to publicans and sinners*: Something of truth there was in this charge; for Christ he was the sinners friend, but undoubtedly the intent of that charge was to accuse Christ with being a friend to sin, and with indulging sin and wickedness in his followers; which was abominable; for though Christ loveth the sinner, yet he hates

Mat. 11. 19.

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the ſin with a perfect hatred. Now if the wicked heart of man could thus charge Chriſt, it's no wonder that this his faithful ſervant ſhould thus be judged. *Hebr.* 1. 9.

And further, as he had great light in the Covenant of Grace, ſo he preacht that Doctrine with the greateſt alacrity, and raiſedneſs of ſpirit imaginable. In the handling of other ſubjects he was more ſtreightned and diſcompoſed, but when he came to ſpeak of the unſearchable riches of the Grace of Chriſt, he was as an Angel of God, lifted up above himſelf: he had a flood of words, and yet ſeemed to want words to expreſs what he did know, and what he did enjoy of divine grace and favour. This being true (as thoſe that did live under his Miniſtry knows it to be) the loſs muſt needs be great.

To loſe a pure Goſpel-Preacher is a great loſs: Eternity depends upon a right underſtanding of the great Doctrine of Juſtification by Chriſt: Eternity depends not upon being baptized once or twice, upon this or the other Form; we may be guilty of miſtakes about the circumſtances of worſhip, and yet be happy; but if we miſtake about the great matter of our Juſtification by Chriſt, we are loſt for ever. And beſides, this Doctrine gives in the beſt comfort in the worſt times, gives peace in trouble, and joy in ſorrow, and life in death, &c. When there are troubles without, and fears within, it is the conſideration of the Covenant of Grace alone that can eſtabliſh and ſettle the heart of a true believer. It's

It's not so much the souls looking to the light within, or to its own qualifications, as to that perfect satisfaction that Christ made to divine justice for all its sins in his own person, that must beget in the soul a well-grounded hope of eternal glory. All our inherent qualifications without an interest in the righteousness and satisfaction of Christ, will leave us short of heaven at the last. But

3. Thirdly, he was a faithful servant of Christs; faithful I say, and that both in respect to God, and also to the souls of such to whom he preacht. First faithful to God; in that whenever it pleased the Lord to reveal ought of his will and pleasure unto him, whenever any thing was warm upon his spirit, that he did judge to be from the Lord, out it came, let it please or displease, hee would not bawk his light and conscience upon no account whatever. He did not shun to declare unto you the whole counsel of God, so far as it was revealed unto him. And then his faithfulness unto your souls did appear in this, that if at any time he was convinced that he had delivered any thing that was not consonant to Scripture, hee would publickly and openly confess his mistake and error, and trample upon his own name and honor to secure your souls, that you might not be mistaken and deceived through his means. That he did at any time mistake, shews that he was a man subject to error, as the best of men are; that he did thus ingenuously and openly confess his error

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error when convinced, shews that he was an eminent faithful Christian, faithful both to truth and the souls of his hearers. I am apt to think that many Preachers have taught erroneous and damnable doctrines, and thereby have seduced many; and that some of these Preachers have been convinced that they have so done, but notwithstanding this conviction, the persons seduced by them might go to hell in their mistakes, before they would indeavor to reduce them, by making an open and publick acknowledgment of those errors which they have preacht. Man is a proud creature, and stands much upon his name and honour; so that it is rare to find a person that is willing (as Mr. *Sympson* often hath done) to trample upon his name, though thereby he might lift up Christ's name, and save souls from dropping into hell.

Fourthly, he was a zealous servant of Christ, 4.
hee was willing to spend and bee spent that hee might fulfil his Ministry, and do your souls good. How laborious was he in preaching? how constant was he in attending upon the Assemblys of the Church? and how often hath he blamed you for neglecting those Assemblys? He was not one that did the work of the Lord negligently, but with a fervent spirit he served his God. He was not one that would indent with God before-hand, that would stand upon terms, saying, Lord, I'le serve thee, so my name, and estate, and liberty may be secured; but whatever he did judge to be his

his duty, he would presently up and be doing, and leave the success and blessing to the Lord.

5. Fifthly; he was an experimental Christian; one that had much communion with God, and much experience of his goodness, as you have heard him often express: Many a Preacher dishes out largely to others, of that which he tasts but little himself. I am apt to think, many a faithful Minister of Christ lives but low, in comparison to what this blessed Saint injoyed. By this his experience, he was enabled to speak a word in due season to the weary soul.

6. Sixthly, he was a very humble condescending Christian: How did he labour after those things that might make for peace? he laboured always to maintain the unity of the spirit, in the bond of peace: he would condescend to the meanest member of the Church for peace sake. If he fail'd in any thing, it was in that he was too apt to be drawn away by the perswasions of his brethren, and could not carry on Church matters with that authority, majestie, severity, and spirit of government, which he might (according to scripture rule) have done, to the reproof, and shame of such, who are desirous of, and content with the enjoyment of Church previledge; but are too high and proud to submit unto Church discipline.

1 Cor. 12. 6. *There are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.* For to one is given a ruling spirit, to another, a healing spirit:

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But all these worketh that one and the self same spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will. And the works and graces of God in his people, are to be honoured and admired according as they shine forth in their operations and diversities. Domination, and rule is that most men seek after. It's hard to find a person that is gifted, willing to condescend (even in those things wherein he may) to those Christians that are below him for peace sake. A healing spirit is a glorious spirit, and a spirit much wanting among the people of God in England. To lose therefore a Christian of a healing composing spirit, is a great loss.

Lastly, He was a holy man. After the Lord was pleased to work upon him by his mighty spirit and power, and to reveal the riches of grace thorow Christ unto his soul, he was (as is known to many) of a heavenly conversation. 7.

He walked close with God in his family; he was not a saint abroad, and a Divel at home; but made it appear that he was really good, by this; that he was relatively good; good in his relations; a good husband, a good father, &c.

He sate loose from this world; he made not gain his godliness; he did not design to make merchandize of Christ and the Gospel.

He hath often denied mony for preaching, especially funerall Sermons; and if any were forced upon him, or sent after him, he would soon dispose of it to the poor.

His discourse was mostly heavenly, and spirituall: If other discourse was in hand, he was but dull company, he had little to say; but if the conference were heavenly, he was as upon the wing, as a fish in the water, and a bird in the air, &c.

If it be here objected, that *Mr. Sympson* was in his younger years of a vain and slight conversation; I answer,

First, Divine love rideth in greatest tryumph, when it hath the greatest sinners following it as it's captives.

Secondly, Some in the Church of *Corinth* that did heartily close with Christ, were before their conversion very vile, and wicked; see 1 *Cor.* 6. 9. 10. 11. *Such were some of you: but ye are washed*, &c. but

Thirdly, This blessed saint would to his dying day acknowledge his former vanity, and ungodlyness, to his own shame, and the lifting up of the riches of free grace through the blood of Christ: and mind what the Apostle saith, 1 *John* 1. 9. *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

Thus much for the 4*th.* motive to humiliation, which was drawn from the qualifications of this servant of Christ.

The 5*th.* and last motive to humiliation is; to consider the great blessing, and success that did attend his ministry: He was (through Gods blessing

sing) instrumental for the conversion of many souls, he hath left behind him many seals of his ministry. Every faithful laborious preacher is not attended with such a blessing. Many a Godly minister hath *Isaiahs* commission (*Chap.* 6. 10.) *To make the heart of his people fat, and their ears heavy*; (dreadful work) *and to shut their eies: lest they see with their eies, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed.* It was the saying of a godly Minister in *England*, after some years preaching to a people, *That he had preach'd his people dead*: I say not, but that many might be the more fit for hell by the means of Mr. *Sympson*'s ministry; it might (through the wickedness of the hearers) be the savour of death unto death to many: but this I say, that God blest him above scores, nay hundreds of Preachers in the great work of Conversion, in turning souls from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto *God*, &c. Now to lose a Minister, whose ministry was attended with so great a blessing (especially at such a time, when it is rare to hear of one new Convert) must needs be a great loss. I shal here in the close of this Exhortation speak a word or two by way of Caution; and that *Caution.*

1. Though this stroke of God be a matter of sorrow and humiliation, yet you must take heed of a murmuring spirit: You have cause to bee displeased with your selves, and your sins, but not with God; and that 1.

1. 1. Becauſe God takes away nothing but what he firſt gave. The perſon and gifts of this Saint, were given unto you by the Lord; he hath taken nothing but his own. Learn therefore to ſay with *Job*, Chap. 1. 21. -- *The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; bleſſed be the name of the Lord.*

2. You have no cauſe to murmure, and that becauſe you had forfeited this mercy long ago: that God continued the Miniſtry of this his ſervant ſo long among you, was a fruit of his ſuper-abounding love.

2. 2. Though you are to mourn under this ſtroke, yet take heed of mourning as thoſe without hope; without hope I ſay, 1. With reſpect to him; his happineſs is unqueſtionable: your loſs is his gain. He is taken up into glory, and hath there communion with God. He is out of the reach of all his enemies, they can now impriſon him no more. He is where hee'l never have any thing impoſed upon him contrary to Conſcience: hee'l never ſuffer there for Non-conformity ſake. There God is ſerved, adored and glorified with one heart, and with one conſent. 2. Mourn not without hope with reſpect to your ſelves, as if God were not able to make up this loſs. I remember a relation of a Lady, from whom it pleaſed God to take an onely Son, that ſometime after a friend coming to viſit her, and bemoaning this her ſad loſs, ſhe breaks forth into theſe expreſſions, [I profeſs (ſaith ſhe) God can never make me amends for the taking away of that Son.]

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Son.] A dreadful ſpeech it was; take heed (my friends) of this ſpirit. It's true, your loſs is great, but God is able to ſupply it; and that either

1. By cauſing the ſpirit of *Elijah* to fall upon *Eliſha*, by anointing and raiſing up of ſome other to head and feed you in the room of this his ſervant. Or 2*ly*, he can feed you himſelf without a Miniſter: God can fill up the room of Miniſtry and Ordinances. Indeed let God be abſent, and there's nothing can fill up his room: It's not husband, wife, children, eſtate, liberty, Paſtors, Ordinances, &c. can ſupply the want of God: but now let God be preſent, and that is above, and more then all. And undoubtedly, if God deny you a publick *Goſpel*-Miniſtry, it's your duty to wait upon him for more ſecret and immediate feedings. I am afraid, that as formerly profeſſors were greatly guilty of ſleighting and deſpiſing the means and miniſtry of the *Goſpel*, ſo now they will be guilty of Idolizing the Ordinance of publick Preaching at ſuch a rate, as to think themſelvs bound and obliged to hear men of any principles or practices, rather then to neglect that Ordinance—Arminians, Socinians, Jeſuits, &c. any thing, every thing, rather then be out of publick worſhip. Take heed of mourning in a ſpirit of unbelief, ſaying, Can God ſpread a table in the wilderneſs? can God feed and teach without a Preacher. To live without the true worſhip of God is bad, but to be found in a way of falſe worſhip is worſe. It's my duty to omit

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that Ordinance of Christ, which I can't enjoy without sin.

Thus much for that part of the Exhortation, which relates to Humiliation: I shall give you two brief words further, and so close. First, Is it so that the death of faithful instruments is a matter of great Humiliation;

Then let this stirr you up to be earnest with the Lord, that he would continue and preserve those faithful ministers that do yet remain, that he would double his spirit upon them: hide them in the secret of his presence: increase their number; Not forgetting the prayer of *Moses* for the tribe of *Levi*, (*Deut.* 33, 11.) in these words. *Bless, Lord, his substance, and except the work of his hands; smite through the loins of them that rise against him, and of them that hate him, that they rise not again.* These words shall undoubtedly be made good with respect unto the ministry of the Gospel, Christ will in his time smite through the loins of them that rise up against a Gospel ministry; hateing, and despitefully using his faithfull servants, & he'l so pierce through their loyns, as that they shall fall, and never rise more.

In the mean time take heed you that profess the name of Christ, that you do not endanger the rest of the faithful labourers that are left amongst you and that neither,

1. By slighting and despising the meanest of them, 2 *Chron.* 36. 16. *But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, misused his prophets, until the wrath of the Lord a-*

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rose against him [illegible] there was no remedy. Nor Secondly, By [illegible] that are most eminent. How [illegible]ous instruments (to speak according to man's judgement) hath the professors of this age sent to their graves before their time, by idolizing their persons and gifts, ascribing that honor and glory to them, which was due to Christ alone? This spirit and frame hath even forced the Lord (in order to the convincing and humbling of his people) either to take away the spirit of zeal and courage from such instruments, & thereby render them unfit for further service, or else to remove them by death from earth to heaven, out of the sight of all his people that dwell in tabernacles of corrupt clay.

Lastly, Such strokes should teach us all to provide for death. God takes away our leaders, and we must follow them: those that would not follow the counsel and advise of Mr. *Sympson* while living, must follow him to the grave now dead; to the grave wee must all go, and the Lord knows how soon: Of what import therefore is it, that we all manage matters so while we live, as that when we com to die we may dye in peace, & in ful assurance of our entrance into glory? We should manage all our matters so in this world, as those that must once dye, and come to judgement: performing every thing with this proviso, *That I may dye well.* I am so to buy, sell, and converse with creatures, *that I may dye well.* I am so to hear, pray, read, receive the supper, have communion with the saints, as

that

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